



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 198

February Session, 2002

Substitute Senate Bill No. 553

Senate, March 27, 2002

The Committee on Public Health reported through SEN. HARP of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT ADJUSTING THE NURSE-TO-TECHNICIAN STAFFING RATIOS FOR KIDNEY DIALYSIS UNITS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1,
- 2 2003, the Commissioner of Public Health shall adopt regulations, in
- 3 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes,
- 4 establishing nurse-to-technician staffing ratios for out-of-hospital out-
- 5 patient dialysis units and in-hospital dialysis units. Such regulations
- 6 shall specify that a minimum of one licensed nurse shall be employed
- 7 in each such unit for every two patient care technicians employed in
- 8 such unit. For purposes of this section, "out-of-hospital out-patient
- 9 dialysis unit" means a licensed facility that provides services on an out-
- 10 patient basis to persons requiring dialysis on a short-term basis or for a
- 11 chronic condition or training for home dialysis, and "in-hospital
- 12 dialysis unit" means a special unit of a licensed hospital designed,
- 13 equipped and staffed to offer dialysis therapy on an out-patient basis,
- 14 and to provide training for home dialysis and renal transplantation, as

15 appropriate.

This act shall take effect as follows:
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Section 1	<i>from passage</i>
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PH *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

OFA Fiscal Note**State Impact:**

Fund-Type	Agency Affected	FY 03 \$	FY 04 \$
General Fund - Cost	University of Connecticut Health Center	Potential Indeterminate	Potential Indeterminate
General Fund - Cost	Department of Public Health	None	None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the establishment of regulations for nurse to patient ratios in kidney dialysis units. The University of Connecticut Health Center currently meets the bill's suggested ratios for in-hospital dialysis units. However, out-of-hospital outpatient dialysis units fall short of the suggested ratios and consequently, there may be a need to acquire additional nurses for compliance.

Given the current workforce shortages in the nursing and other allied health fields, finding sufficient nurses to achieve these ratios may be difficult. Registered nurse (RN) salaries vary depending on employer and years of experience. The annual salary for an RN ranges between \$50,000 and \$65,000.

The Department of Public Health will be able to adopt the required regulations within its anticipated budgetary resources.

OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 553

AN ACT ADJUSTING THE NURSE-TO-TECHNICIAN STAFFING RATIOS FOR KIDNEY DIALYSIS UNITS**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner to adopt regulations, by January 1, 2003, establishing nurse-to-technician staffing ratios for out-of-hospital outpatient dialysis units and in-patient dialysis units. The regulations must require that at least one licensed nurse be employed in each unit for every two patient care technicians in the unit. (Staffing ratio regulations for dialysis units currently exist.)

The bill defines "out-of-hospital outpatient dialysis unit" as a licensed facility providing services on an outpatient basis to persons requiring dialysis on a short-term basis or for a chronic condition or training for home dialysis. "In-hospital dialysis unit" means a special unit in a hospital designed, equipped, and staffed to offer dialysis therapy on an outpatient basis, and to provide training for home dialysis and renal transplantations, as appropriate.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND***Current Regulations***

Under DPH regulations, at all times, at least 50% of a dialysis unit's patient care staff must be licensed nurses. A registered nurse (RN) must be on duty anytime the unit is in operation. Patient care technicians can comprise no more than 50% of the staff providing direct care in the unit. "Patient care technicians," under the regulations, are trained employees in a dialysis unit who can participate in patient care under the direct supervision of an RN.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Public Health Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 15 Nay 9